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## Labor and Public Employees Committee In Support of S.B. 352

I, Iris Reyes, have been a childcare provider with Care4Kids for 3 years. I care for my sister's children – my 4 year old niece and my 7 year old nephew. I provide full time care for my niece. My nephew I watch only after school and on school vacations.

I would like for there to be changes to the Care4Kids program because I am having many problems with the program and this work is my sole source of income. I would like to see more accountability from the program towards all of us providers. For example, I would like to receive my checks on time, speak with attentive people when I have problems for which I need to call, etc.

A big problem I have been having is with lost checks. Care4Kids told me that they had mailed me my subsidy check from November, but it never arrived at my home. I have been calling Care4Kids constantly from November until February. They always tell me that they will send it, but I have yet to receive it and they have never given me a date when I can expect it. And now, because of that check, all of my bills are behind. The electric company is going to cut off my electricity. That includes my light and heat, which I need to care for my niece and nephew.

These are the consequences of the problems that we providers have with Care4Kids. There's no reason that I should have to deal with the consequences of their mistakes because I comply with all of their paperwork requirements, etc. And it isn't necessary to be on the phone so much calling them to receive my checks on time, because the children that we care for also require my complete time and attention.

I also have the problem that Care4Kids never sends any of my checks on time.

I and other providers want to be united like a family so that we can make new changes with the Care4Kids program. That's why 95% of all providers who voted in our union election voted YES to form our childcare providers union. We want to change the system of pay, for example to create direct deposit but also to mail checks on time to those who don't choose direct deposit – to be paid every two weeks instead of monthly – to have access to health insurance – to raise the subsidy rates because we cannot live on these wages – for Care4Kids to be more accountable with the paperwork that we submit. Passing this law to grant us full collective bargaining rights to form a contract with the state, is the best way that we providers can resolve these problems and improve the program.